

## DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE



### Direct Care Leads Job Growth in New York State

Comprising almost 530,000 personal care aides, home health aides, and nursing assistants, the direct care workforce is New York State's largest workforce—and it is growing quickly. Direct care will add far more new jobs than any other occupation in the state within the decade, and will also see the most total job openings (including new jobs plus vacancies caused by workers moving into other occupations or leaving the labor force).

#### TOP 5 JOBS WITH THE MOST GROWTH IN NEW YORK STATE, 2018–2028

Occupation	New Jobs
<b>All Direct Care Workers</b>	<b>279,100</b>
Registered Nurses	49,200
Janitors and Cleaners	31,300
Fast Food Workers	20,100
General & Operations Managers	16,200

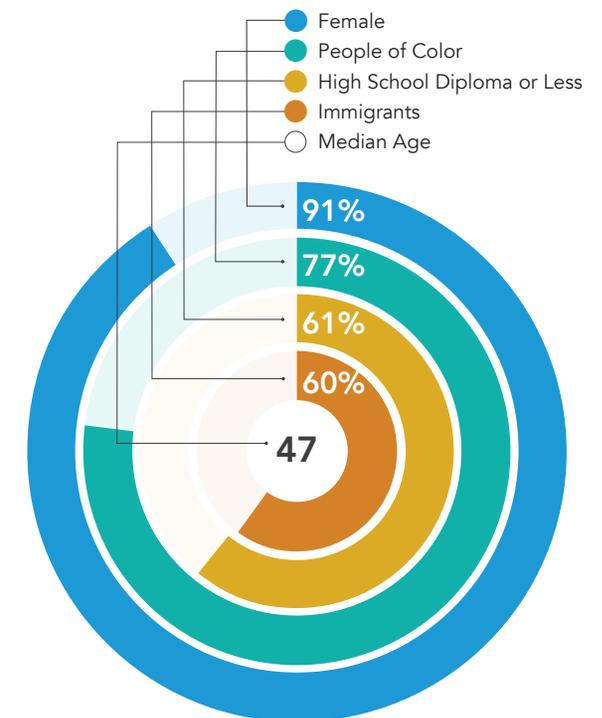
#### TOP 5 JOBS WITH THE MOST OPENINGS IN NEW YORK STATE, 2018–2028

Occupation	Job Openings
<b>All Direct Care Workers</b>	<b>1,116,800</b>
Retail Salespersons	394,200
Fast Food Workers	373,400
Cashiers	341,000
Waiters and Waitresses	330,100

### Who Are New York's Direct Care Workers?

Direct care workers provide essential daily supports that enable older adults and people with disabilities to thrive and help family caregivers continue working. In New York, the typical direct care worker is a woman of color, and many workers are immigrants to the United States.

#### NEW YORK STATE'S DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE BY THE NUMBERS:



## Direct Care Workers Struggle to Earn a Living

Despite their important contributions to long-term care and the broader economy, economic self-sufficiency remains an elusive goal for many direct care workers. Median annual earnings for these workers in New York State are only **\$21,100**. Meanwhile, a single adult without children needs over \$32,300 to cover the cost of living in the state and a single adult with two children needs more than \$85,200, according to MIT's Living Wage Calculator. As a result of low wages and annual earnings, **45 percent of the state's direct care workers live in or near poverty** (below 200 percent of the federal poverty level) and **51 percent rely on public assistance**.

### LOOKING ACROSS NEW YORK STATE

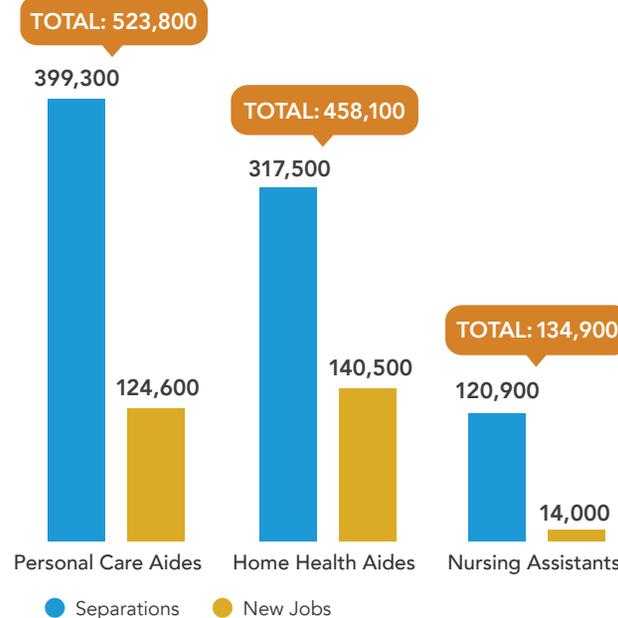
Understanding regional differences helps in developing tailored workforce development strategies and policy solutions. Here's a snapshot of New York's direct care workforce across regions by size and median wages.

Region	Direct Care Workers	Median Wage
Capital	18,020	\$14.28
Central New York	11,410	\$13.63
Finger Lakes	22,030	\$13.95
Hudson Valley	44,140	\$15.55
Long Island	57,570	\$16.16
Mohawk Valley	13,510	\$13.37
New York City	323,180	\$15.71
North Country	7,210	\$14.11
Southern Tier	8,780	\$13.94
Western New York	22,230	\$13.51

## Home Care Workforce Challenges Are Acute

Nearly **88 percent of job openings in New York State will be in home care**, including home health aide and personal care aide jobs. But these workers face particular challenges. **Median annual earnings for home care workers are only \$19,200**, over \$10,000 less than annual earnings for nursing assistants in nursing homes—and **57 percent of home care workers rely upon public benefits**, compared to 35 percent of nursing assistants. Without improving the quality of home care jobs, New York State will struggle to fill projected job openings and meet the growing demand for home care.

DIRECT CARE WORKER JOB OPENINGS BY OCCUPATION, 2018–2028



## Stakeholders Must Take Action

All stakeholders—including policymakers, community-based organizations, employers, workforce development organizations, payers, and others—must take action to improve job quality and ensure that New Yorkers have access to high-quality long-term care services across settings.

We must invest in our direct care workers by:

- Enhancing the quality of entry-level and ongoing training;
- Improving direct care workers' schedules and compensation;
- Developing career pathways for direct care workers;
- Incorporating supports that enable workers to be successful in their jobs;
- Establishing robust workforce data collection systems;
- Building cultural and linguistic competence into all aspects of long-term care; and
- Exploring other innovative ways to invest in and support workers.

To learn more about New York City's direct care workforce and PHI, contact PHI State Policy Manager **Allison Cook** at [ACook@PHInational.org](mailto:ACook@PHInational.org)

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*PHI works to transform eldercare and disability services. We foster dignity, respect, and independence—for all who receive care, and all who provide it. As the nation's leading authority on the direct care workforce, PHI promotes quality direct care jobs as the foundation for quality care. Visit us at [PHInational.org](http://PHInational.org).*



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\* Data are from the most recent year available. Employment projections and regional data: New York Department of Labor. 2020. *Employment Projections*. <https://labor.ny.gov/stats/lsproj.shtm>; analysis by PHI (October 5, 2020). Demographics and job quality: PHI. "Workforce Data Center." Last modified September 14, 2020. <https://phinational.org/policy-research/workforce-data-center/>.